

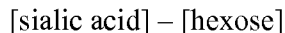
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Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 10, 24 and 26, and amend claims 1-5, 8, 9, 11-14, 17-23, 25 and 27. The Claim Listing below will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application:

Claim Listing:

1. (currently amended) A modified serogroup W135 meningococcal capsular saccharide, conjugated to a carrier protein, wherein: (a) ~~$\leq 29\%$~~ between 2-9% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b) ~~$\geq 26\%$~~ between 35-55% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
2. (currently amended) A modified serogroup Y meningococcal capsular saccharide, conjugated to a carrier protein, wherein (a) ~~$\leq 9\%$~~ between 2-9% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b) ~~$\geq 29\%$ or $\leq 27\%$~~ between 35-55% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
3. (currently amended) The modified meningococcal capsular saccharide of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein ~~$> 0\%$~~ between 4-8% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 7 position.
4. (currently amended) The modified meningococcal capsular saccharide of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein ~~$> 0\%$~~ between 40-50% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
5. (currently amended) A modified meningococcal capsular saccharide, ~~optionally~~ conjugated to a carrier protein, wherein the saccharide comprises n or more repeating units of the disaccharide unit:



where the hexose is either galactose or glucose and n is an integer from 1 to 100, and wherein:

- (a) ~~$\leq x\%$~~ $x\%$ of the sialic acid residues in said n or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or

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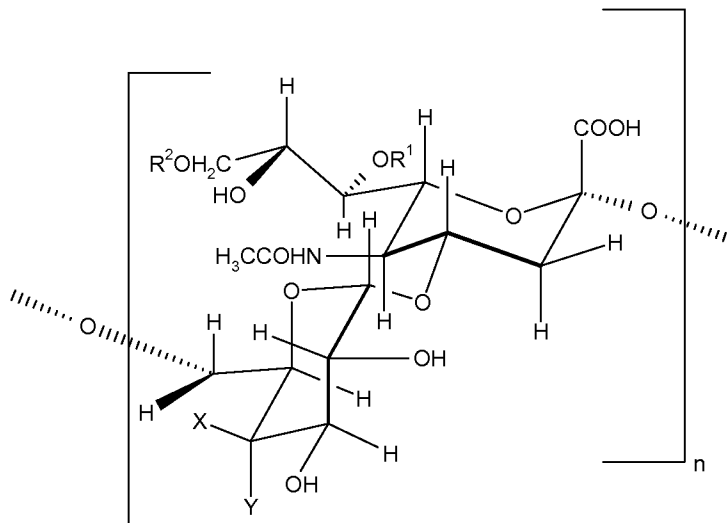
(b) when hexose is galactose, $\geq \frac{x}{y}\%$ $\frac{y}{z}\%$ of the sialic acid residues in said n or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position, and when hexose is glucose, $\geq \frac{x}{y}\%$ or $\leq \frac{z}{y}\%$ $\frac{y}{z}\%$ of the sialic acid residues in said n or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position,

where: when hexose is galactose, x is 29 x is between 2-9 and y is 26 y is between 35-55; and when hexose is glucose, x is 9, y is 29 and z is 27 x is between 2-9 and y is between 35-55.

6. (original) The saccharide of claim 5, wherein hexose is galactose, about 6% of the sialic acid residues in said n or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 7 position, and about 43% of the sialic acid residues in said n or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
7. (original) The saccharide of claim 5, wherein hexose is glucose, about 6% of the sialic acid residues in said n or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 7 position, and about 45% of the sialic acid residues in said n or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position.
8. (currently amended) A composition comprising a molecules of serogroup W135 meningococcal capsular saccharide, wherein (i) the average number of sialic acid residues per capsular saccharide molecule is b , and wherein: (a) $\leq 29\%$ between 2-9% of the $a \cdot b$ serogroup W135 sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b) $\geq 26\%$ between 35-55% of the $a \cdot b$ serogroup W135 sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 9 position, and (ii) the saccharide is conjugated to a carrier protein.
9. (currently amended) A composition comprising a molecules of serogroup Y meningococcal capsular saccharide, wherein (i) the average number of sialic acid residues per capsular saccharide molecule is b , and wherein: (a) $\leq 9\%$ between 2-9% of the $a \cdot b$ serogroup Y sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b) $\geq 29\%$ or $\leq 27\%$ between 35-55% of the $a \cdot b$ serogroup Y sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 9 position, (ii) the saccharide is conjugated to a carrier protein.
10. (cancelled)

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11. (currently amended) A saccharide comprising n or more repeats of the following disaccharide unit:



wherein:

- n is an integer from 1 to 100,
- X and Y are different groups selected from -H and -OH,
- R_1 is independently selected from -H and -COCH₃ and may be the same or different in each disaccharide unit,
- R_2 is independently selected from -H and -COCH₃ and may be the same or different in each disaccharide unit, and,
- when X is -OH and Y is -H, (a) $\leq 29\%$ 2-10% of R^1 are -COCH₃ and/or (b) $\geq 26\%$ 35-55% of R^2 are -COCH₃.
- when X is -H and Y is -OH, (a) $\leq 9\%$ 2-9% of R^1 are -COCH₃ and/or (b) $\geq 29\%$ or $\leq 27\%$ 35-55% of R^2 are -COCH₃,

and wherein the saccharide is conjugated to a carrier protein.

12. (currently amended) The saccharide of ~~any preceding claim~~ any one of claims 1-7 and 11, wherein the saccharide has an average degree of polymerisation of less than 30.
13. (currently amended) The ~~conjugation product of (i) a saccharide of any preceding claim one of claims 1-7 and 11, and (ii) a~~ wherein the carrier protein is selected from the group consisting of: diphtheria toxoid, tetanus toxoid, *H. influenzae* protein D, and CRM₁₉₇.

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14. (currently amended) An immunogenic composition comprising (a) a modified capsular saccharide ~~or conjugate of any preceding claim~~ one of claims 1-7 and 11, and (b) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
15. (original) The composition of claim 14, in aqueous form.
16. (original) The composition of claim 14, in lyophilised form.
17. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 16~~ claim 14, further comprising a capsular saccharide antigen from serogroup C of *N.meningitidis*.
18. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 17~~ claim 14, further comprising a capsular saccharide antigen from serogroup A of *N.meningitidis*.
19. (currently amended) The composition of claim 18, wherein the serogroup A antigen is a modified saccharide in which one or more of the hydroxyl groups on the native saccharide has/have been replaced by a blocking group.
20. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 19~~ claim 14, further comprising an antigen from serogroup B of *N.meningitidis*.
21. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 20~~ claim 14, further comprising a saccharide antigen from *Haemophilus influenzae* type B.
22. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 21~~ claim 14, further comprising an antigen from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.
23. (currently amended) The composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 22~~ claim 14, further comprising one or more of: an antigen from hepatitis A virus; an antigen from hepatitis B virus; an antigen from *Bordetella pertussis*; a diphtheria toxoid; a tetanus toxoid; and/or a poliovirus antigen.
24. (cancelled)
25. (currently amended) A method for raising an antibody response in a mammal, comprising administering a composition of ~~any one of claims 14 to 23~~ claim 14 to the mammal.
26. (cancelled)

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27. (currently amended) A process for preparing an immunogenic conjugate comprising the steps of: (1) providing a starting serogroup W135 or serogroup Y meningococcal capsular saccharide and a carrier protein, either or both of which is/are optionally modified to render it/them reactive towards the other; (2) forming a covalent bond between the saccharide and the carrier protein; and (3) purifying the resulting glycoconjugates, wherein, between steps (1) and (3), the degree of O-acetylation at the 9 position of sialic acid residues in the starting saccharide increases to 35-55%.